

additions to their family. The boys obviously feel the same way. Thanks to their hard work, thanks to the hard work of a county social worker, their adoption was finalized quickly, on the same day as their mother's birthday.

Willie and Sybil Gray originally planned to adopt one little girl who would become a sister to their son, Christopher. But an adoption agency told them that Kenyetta and Katrina, two sisters who needed a new home, needed to be adopted. The girls and their new parents quickly bonded, and Willie and Sybil will finalize their adoption in the next few months.

Adoptive parents like Willie and Sybil and Derek and Cindy give their children the most precious gift possible, their love. Advocates for adoption, many of whom are in this room, know that when you find a loving family, it makes a huge difference in a child's life, and know that our national goal must be to find a loving family for every child that needs one.

Sadly, a great American and a strong advocate for adoption and stable families passed away this week. Dave Thomas was best known as the founder of Wendy's Restaurants. But people who devote their lives to helping children know that Dave Thomas shared their commitment. As a child who was adopted, Dave once said, "I feel strongly that all children deserve a secure and loving family." His own family provided the foundation that allowed him and encouraged him to become one of America's most successful entrepreneurs and one of America's most familiar faces.

Dave's vision of America was one in which all children would be a part of a loving family, so they could grow into healthy and happy and successful adults. This bill that I'm fixing to sign will bring us closer to his vision.

And now I'd like the Members of the Congress and Secretary Thompson to join me as I sign the "Promoting Safe and Stable Families" legislation.

[At this point, the President signed the bill.]

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:22 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy G. Thompson. H.R. 2873, ap-

proved January 17, was assigned Public Law No. 107-133.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the President's Council on Bioethics

January 17, 2002

The President. It's nice to see everybody.

Participant. We're very pleased to be here.

The President. I'm glad you're here. First, let me just say a couple of comments. One, I think—let me thank Leon for taking on the assignment. I appreciate so very much Leon's counsel early on in my administration about how to deal with some very important issues. And then, obviously, I made the decision to put together a council, and I want to thank you all for serving.

I just told NBC News in there that I really think you can help be the conscience of the country, to help us understand some really, really difficult issues that face America and will really face us as we go down the road, and what a vital, vital contribution that you're going to make. It'll help people like me understand what the terms mean and how to come to grips with how medicine and science interface with the dignity of—the issue of life and the dignity of life and the notion that life is—you know, that there is a Creator.

This is, I think, one of these historic moments for our country, as we come to grips with a new world and how to deal with the new world. And I hope you take this—I know you take this seriously, and I just want to assure you I take it seriously and so does this administration. We all have consciences, and we wrestle with very tough issues. And there's no easy answer to some of the issues. It's hard to look at a parent of a child who's dying and believes if you take life, it will save a life. I mean, these are tough, tough issues to confront.

And I've confronted one already, and there will be others. And I look forward to your advice and counsel, and so does the Nation. It's not just me, it's the country that's going to count on you to really think through what we face.

And not only that, it will serve the world, because we're now in a unique position. I

don't want to be megalomaniac about my views, but we're leading—we're leading on a lot of fronts. And this is another front in which this country can lead, because I can assure you that other leaders are looking at it. I've talked to them, and they don't know what to do. They're wrestling with decisions, and when America makes up her mind to do something, a lot of people listen. So this is a huge forum.

So thanks for taking it on. And I want to thank Leon for his leadership. And I want to thank Tommy for being here—and Dr. Marburger. And I'll be glad to listen, answer questions. I'm not sure what we ought to do, Leon, but first you ought to say something.

[At this point, Dr. Leon R. Kass, bioethicist, University of Chicago, and Chair, President's Council on Bioethics, made brief remarks.]

The President. Let me say two other things, and then I will listen. One, you need to monitor the stem cell issue. That was the charge I gave on national TV that day, and I forgot to mention that. And the other thing is that I have spoken clearly on cloning. I just don't think it's right. On the other hand, there is going to be a lot of nuance and subtlety to the issue, I presume. And I think this is very important for you all to help the Nation understand what this means.

And with that, I'd be glad to hear folks. Mr. Carter.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:55 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson; John H. Marburger III, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy; and Stephen Carter, William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law, Yale Law School. The Office of the Press Secretary released the names of 17 members of the President's Council on Bioethics on January 16. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Dr. Kass. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Proclamation 7518—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2002

January 17, 2002

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

For too brief a time, our Nation was blessed by the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. King was a modern American hero whose leadership rallied people of all races to rise up against injustice. His commitment to stand peacefully for the conviction that all men are created equal brought about changes in the laws of our Nation, and he paid the ultimate price for the courage he demonstrated in attempting to ensure that all men and women were treated equally in the eyes of the law and by their fellow citizens. It is with a great sense of pride and gratitude that we celebrate this 17th national holiday in honor of Dr. King's life and work. Let us take this opportunity to recall his vision and renew his call for equal justice for all.

We enter this new year and this annual celebration with a revived national spirit. The events of September 11, 2001, have drawn us closer as a Nation and increased our resolve to protect the life and liberty we cherish. And while our patriotism and neighborly affections run high, these circumstances have given us renewed purpose in rededicating ourselves to Dr. King's "dream." As he said on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963: "I have a dream my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by content of their character." Dr. King's words were not just a call to change our laws, but they also served as a challenge to all Americans to change their hearts by refusing to judge people by their skin color or their national origin, by their race or their religion. For while we have made progress, there is much work to be done, both at home and abroad.